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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/073,682	02/11/2002	Dale G. Brown	05369/00017	4563

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EXAMINER

YOUNG, MICAH PAUL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1615

DATE MAILED: 11/04/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/073,682

Applicant(s)

BROWN ET AL.

Examiner

Micah-Paul Young

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1615

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 04/24/03
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

**Acknowledgment of Papers Received:** information Disclosure Statement dated April 26, 2002

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 3, 7, 8, 15, 16, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 3 recites that the device is fibrillating as described as illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6. Applicant is reminded that claims must be complete in and of themselves and cannot rely upon references to the specification or figures in order to clearly define their limitations. Cancellation and/or clarification of this claim is requested.

Claims 7, 15, 16, 21 and 22 contain the trademark/trade names SoftAbrasives™, MICRODENT®, ULTRAMULSION®. Where a trademark or trade name is used in a claim as a limitation to identify or describe a particular material or product, the claim does not comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. See *Ex parte Simpson*, 218 USPQ 1020 (Bd. App. 1982). The claim scope is uncertain since the trademark or trade name cannot be used properly to identify any particular material or product. A trademark or trade name is used to identify a source of goods, and not the goods themselves. Thus, a trademark or trade name does not identify or describe the goods associated with the trademark or trade name. In the present

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case, the trademark/trade name is used to identify/describe abrasive particles, and anti-tartar substances and, accordingly, the identification/description is indefinite.

3. Claims 7 and 8 recites the limitation "mixtures of (a) and (b)" in line 19, and line 9 respectively. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

6. Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined disclosures of Zachariades et al (USPN 5,479,952) and Hill et al (USPN 5,098,711). The claims are drawn to an interproximal device comprising ultra high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE) and a coating.

7. Zachariades discloses an interproximal device comprising UHMWPE coated with oral care formulations (abstract). The polymer has a tensile strength of 0.1 to 1.2 GPa, a width of

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.001 inches to 0.25 inches, and a thickness of 0.001 inches to 0.004 inches (col. 8, lin. 22 – 36).

The reference however is silent to the specific coating compositions.

8. Hill et al discloses coated interproximal devices (abstract). The coating composition includes chemotherapeutic compounds (col. 12, lin. 28-39), surfactants and emollients (col. 11, lin. 5-62), and antimicrobials (col. 12, lin. 30-39) and anti-tartar compounds (col. 13, lin. 53-60), abrasives (col. 16, lin. 57-65). The coatings are present in concentrations ranging from 10mg to 100mg per yard (col. 18, lin. 8-12). The coatings are loaded onto the polyethylene threads in various methods. However claims 5 recites a product being produced by a process.

It is the position of the examiner that such a limitation does not impart patentability on the product. Even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production. If the product in the product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious from a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.” *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 227 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985)

The Patent Office bears a lesser burden of proof in making out a case of prima facie obviousness for product-by-process claims because of their peculiar nature” than when a product is claimed in the conventional fashion. See *In re Fessmann*, 489 F.2d 742, 744, 180 USPQ 324, 326 (CCPA 1974). Once the examiner provides a rationale tending to show that the claimed product appears to be the same or similar to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process, the burden shifts to applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious

difference between the claimed product and the prior art product. See *In re Marosi*, 710 F.2d 798, 802, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir.1983)

9. With these things in mind, one of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to coat the UHMWPE interproximal devices of '952 with the coating compositions and compounds of Hill in order to impart better oral care properties onto the devices. It would have been obvious to combine the teachings under the suggestions of '952 with an expected result of a coated interproximal device with improved oral care properties.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

10. Claims 18 and 19 would be deemed free of the prior art at this time. Claims 18 and 19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

#### ***Correspondence***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Micah-Paul Young whose telephone number is 571-272-0608. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00-4:30 every other Monday off.

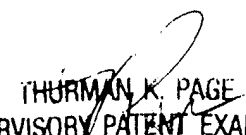
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thurman K. Page can be reached on 571-272-0602. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Micah-Paul Young  
Examiner  
Art Unit 1615

MP Young

  
THURMAN K. PAGE  
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